

Exegetical Notes, Deuteronomy 6:1-25

“Love the Lord Your God”

Prepared by Charles H. Jensen, Pastor, Cornerstone Fellowship

101 Kyllies Road, Coatesville, PA 19320

610-384-1375

charleshjensen@aol.com

Deuteronomy 6:1-25

Verses 1-3

These are the commands, decrees and laws the LORD your God directed me to teach you to observe in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess,² so that you, your children and their children after them may fear the LORD your God as long as you live by keeping all his decrees and commands that I give you, and so that you may enjoy long life.³ Hear, Israel, and be careful to obey so that it may go well with you and that you may increase greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, just as the LORD, the God of your ancestors, promised you.

- Having charged the people of Israel to hear, learn, and follow the Laws of God, and having given them the summary version of the law, the Ten Commandments, Moses now begins to instruct them on each specific part of the law in detail.
- He reminds them that they are under covenant obligation, by their own choosing, to God. They have bound themselves to God and have agreed to keep/obey God’s law. If they fulfill their part of the covenant, God will bless them and their children.
- Jesus said that this was the first and greatest commandment. See Matthew 22:34-40 and Mark 12:28-31

Verses 4-9

⁴ Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. ⁵ Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. ⁶ These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. ⁷ Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. ⁸ Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. ⁹ Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

- Verses 4-5 contain the great commandment. Israel is to love God with her entire heart, soul, and all her strength. It simply means that Israel is to love YHWH above and beyond everything else including self, family, wealth. Israel is love God about everything else.
- Since she will demonstrate her love for God by keeping his commandments there are several things which she must do. She must write the commandments of God on her heart. She must teach them to her children by talking about them with her children at every opportunity. She is to wear the law of God on her hands and on her forehead. And she is to write them on the door frames of her houses and on her gates.

Verses 10-12

When the LORD your God brings you into the land he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give you—a land with large, flourishing cities you did not build,¹¹ houses filled with all kinds of good things you did not provide, wells you did not dig, and vineyards and olive groves you did not plant—then when you eat and are satisfied,¹² be careful that you do not forget the LORD, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

- Notice that the word is “when,” not “if.” God, who knows the future, understands that Israel will accept the “deal” which he is offering and will inherit the promised land.
- When Israel receives the promised land, she must never forget from whom the blessing came. God gave it all to her; none of it was her doing.

Verses 13-19

Fear the LORD your God, serve him only and take your oaths in his name.¹⁴ Do not follow other gods, the gods of the peoples around you;¹⁵ for the LORD your God, who is among you, is a jealous God and his anger will burn against you, and he will destroy you from the face of the land.¹⁶ Do not put the LORD your God to the test as you did at Massah.¹⁷ Be sure to keep the commands of the LORD your God and the stipulations and decrees he has given you.¹⁸ Do what is right and good in the LORD’s sight, so that it may go well with you and you may go in and take over the good land the LORD promised on oath to your ancestors,¹⁹ thrusting out all your enemies before you, as the LORD said.

- Israel is to be loyal to YHWH alone. She may not worship the gods of her neighbors. YHWH will know of her disobedience because he is there with

her. If she disobeys, he will be angry with her and remove his hand of blessing so that the land is lost to her and her children.

- Massah is mentioned in Exodus 17:1-7. The Hebrew word means “testing.” It was at this place that Israel tested God concerning having water.
- These verses warn Israel again that she will be blessed through obedience to God’s law and that disobedience will cause his blessing to end.

Verses 20-25

²⁰ In the future, when your son asks you, “What is the meaning of the stipulations, decrees and laws the LORD our God has commanded you?”²¹ tell him: “We were slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt, but the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand.²² Before our eyes the LORD sent signs and wonders—great and terrible—on Egypt and Pharaoh and his whole household.²³ But he brought us out from there to bring us in and give us the land he promised on oath to our ancestors.²⁴ The LORD commanded us to obey all these decrees and to fear the LORD our God, so that we might always prosper and be kept alive, as is the case today.²⁵ And if we are careful to obey all this law before the LORD our God, as he has commanded us, that will be our righteousness.”

- As the blessings of God for future generations are hinged upon the obedience of those generations, it is important that the present generation teach the next generation correctly. The people of Israel, are commanded to teach their children about what God did for Israel in the past. They are to be sure to explain to their children that God’s future blessing is contingent upon their continued obedience and respect. If the next generation is not so taught, they will become forgetful of the law and of God and so lose God’s blessing.

(These exegetical notes are the foundational study for the sermon entitled *Love the Lord Your God*. They have been prepared by the Reverend Doctor Charles H. Jensen, Senior Pastor at Cornerstone Fellowship, Coatesville Pennsylvania. All rights are reserved by Dr. Jensen and *Cornerstone Fellowship*.)